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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4745
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1579
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0565
RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 0479
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
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SENSITIVE
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SUBJECT: NIGERIA: NEW MINISTERS SWORN IN AND PORTFOLIOS
ASSIGNED, OTHERS NOMINATED

REF: ABUJA 2376

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On December 17, President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua swore in 16 new cabinet ministers and reassigned portfolios among both new and old Cabinet ministers. The newly announced positions included former OPEC Secretary General Rilwan Lukman as Energy Minister, Sam Egwu as Education Minister, Shettima Mustafa as Defense Minister, and Godsdag Orubebe as Minister for the Niger Delta (we are confirming if Orubebe will be Minister or Minister of State).

Also, ministers from the previous Cabinet who remained included Chief Ojo Maduekwe for Foreign Affairs, Godwin Abbe for Interior, and Michael Aondoakaa as Minister of Justice and Attorney General. In addition, on December 12, Obong Ufot Ekaette, Chief Achike Udenwa, and Rilwan Babalola were all nominated by Yar'Adua to fill some of the remaining positions in his Cabinet. Full analysis of these actions to follow septel. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (SBU) On December 17, President Yar'Adua swore in 16 new cabinet members during the weekly Federal Executive Council meeting, and readministered the oath of office to those remaining on from the previous Cabinet. The new cabinet assignments (as heard) include:

- Chief Ojo Maduekwe to remain as Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Michael Aondoakaa to remain as Minister of Justice/Attorney General
- Shettima Mustapha as Minister of Defense
- Sam Egwu as Minister of Education
- Rilwan Lukman as senior Minister of Petroleum
- Dora Akunyili as Minister of Information and Communications
- Godwin Abbe to remain as Minister of Interior
- Godsdag Orubebe as Minister for the Niger Delta (a new position)
- John Odey as Minister of Environment
- Ibrahim Isa Bio as Minister of Transport
- Babatunde Oshotimehin as Minister of Health
- Adetokunbo Kayode as Minister of Labor
- Muhammed Aliero as Minister for the Federal Capital Territory
- Salamatu Suleiman as Minister for Women's Affairs
- Hassan Lawal as Minister of Housing (a new position)
- Ibrahim Yakubu Lame as Minister of Police (a new position)
- Alhassan Bako Zaku as Minister of Science and Technology
- Deziani Alison-Madueke as Minister of Mines and Steel Development

- Sayyadi Abba Ruma to remain as Minister of Agriculture and Water Resources
- Sani Mohammed Ndanusa as Minister of Sports
- Ibrahim Kazaure as Minister of Special Duties
- Fidelia Njeze as Minister of State for Agriculture and Water Resources
- Bagudu Hirse remained as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
- Jibril Maigari as Minister of State for Foreign Affairs
- (2)
- Grace Ekpiwhre as Minister of State for Housing
- Ikara Aliyu Bilbis as Minister of State for Information and Communication
- Ademola Rasaq Seriki as Minister of State for Defense
- Odein Ajumgobia remained as Minister of State for Petroleum
- Aliyu Idi Hong as Minister of State for Health
- Aishatu Jibril Dukku remained as Minister of State for Education
- Aderemi Babalola remained as Minister of State for Finance
- Shamsudeen Usman as Minister/Deputy Chairman of the National Planning Commission
- Chuka Odom as Minister of State for the Federal Capital Territory
- Nuhu Somo Way as Minister of State for Energy (Power)

The Ministers of Finance, Culture, and Commerce and Industry, among others, were not announced. (Comment: we expect one or more additional tranches of names to be sent to the Senate for vetting in the near future. Only once they have been confirmed and assigned portfolios will this reshuffle, first announced by the President last May, be completed. End

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comment.)

13. (SBU) On December 12, Yar'Adua forwarded to the Senate the names of Obong Ufot Ekaette, Chief Achike Udenwa, and Rilwan Babalola as new nominees. Information about the new nominees is as follows:

- Obong Ufot Ekaette was Former President Obasanjo's Secretary to the Government of the Federation from 1999-2007, and was one of his closest and most trusted aides. He also served as Deputy Governor of Akwa Ibom state in 1990. While some view his nomination as an effort to bring in experienced hands, others see it as recycling those who carry baggage from previous, undistinguished government service.

- Chief Achike Udenwa is a member of the People's Democratic Party and former Governor of Imo State.

- We have not yet developed information about Rilwan Babalola.

14. (U) Septel with full analysis and next steps to follow. Sanders